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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/04/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#) [GM](#)  
SUBJECT: GERMANY WILLING TO SUPPORT ANA EXPANSION, BUT  
WORRIED ABOUT COST, SUSTAINABILITY

REF: STATE 93225

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR JEFF RATHKE. REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. At the September 10 Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) meeting, Germany is prepared to go along with the Afghan government's request to expand the Afghan National Army (ANA), but has concerns about the cost and the sustainability of this initiative. German officials also claim that Germany may have difficulties contributing to a trust fund to sustain the ANA because of restrictive budget regulations. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) Post provided reftel non-paper to MFA Deputy Director of Afghanistan Affairs Thomas Zahneisen and MFA ISAF Action Officer Lukas Wasielewski September 2 and followed up to get their reactions September 3.

[1](#)3. (C) Wasielewski said Germany agreed with the overall concept of helping the Afghans establish a national army that would be capable one day of assuming responsibility for the country's security without assistance from international forces. In that context, he said Germany was hardly in a position to block a request from the Afghans themselves to increase the size of the ANA from 86,000 to 134,000.

[1](#)4. (C) That said, Wasielewski noted that Germany would have preferred more time for this proposal to be discussed and considered before being brought to the JCMB for endorsement. He wondered, for example, whether enough thought had been given to the cost and sustainability of this initiative and how it would be carried out given the difficulties in meeting the current requirement for embedded training teams (OMLTs) for a much smaller ANA. He noted that the increase in the ANA would presumably require the expansion of new German ANA training facilities already under construction in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif and elsewhere.

[1](#)5. (C) Wasielewski also put down a marker that Germany could have trouble contributing to a trust fund to support the sustainment of the ANA, given German budget regulations that require government funding to be appropriated for specific purposes. (Comment: Germany has contributed to other Afghanistan-related trust funds -- like the Law and Order Trust Fund that supports the Afghan National Police -- so this problem may be more political than legal, and is therefore probably surmountable. End Comment.)

TIMKEN JR